



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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NRC SETS SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW OF LES APPLICATION; OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO REQUEST PARTICIPATION IN HEARING

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has established a 30-month milestone schedule for reviewing an application from Louisiana Energy Services (LES) to build a gas centrifuge uranium enrichment plant in Eunice, New Mexico, to be known as the National Enrichment Facility. The agency will hold a hearing on the application as part of its review and invites persons whose interest may be affected by the proceeding to file a written petition for permission to participate in the hearing.

LES is an international consortium of companies in the nuclear industry consisting of two general partners, Urenco Investments, Inc., and Westinghouse Enrichment Company, and six limited partners. The NRC has determined that the application, which was submitted on December 15, contains sufficient information for the agency to begin its detailed review and has formally "docketed," or filed, the application. A copy will be available on the NRC's Agencywide Document Access and Management System (ADAMS) using accession number ML040020261 through <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams/web-based.html>. A copy is also available at the NRC's Public Document Room at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

The Commission believes that it is obligated to make sure that its adjudicatory processes are conducted in a manner that would achieve sound and timely decisions. Consequently, the Commission will endeavor to identify efficiencies, and provide the pertinent resources the agency needs to complete reviews and reach timely decisions in licensing uranium enrichment facilities.

The NRC staff will conduct a comprehensive review of the LES application and prepare a safety evaluation report and an environmental impact statement before the hearing is completed. The applicant (LES) and the NRC staff will be parties to the hearing.

Any other person whose interest may be affected and who wishes to participate as a party in the hearing proceeding must file a petition to intervene within 60 days of publication of the Commission's notice and order in the *Federal Register*, expected shortly. The petition must be filed with the Secretary of the Commission, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, Attention: Rulemaking and Adjudications Staff, with copies by fax or e-mail and to the NRC staff and applicant attorney at the addresses listed in the *Federal Register* notice. The petition must include the particular interest of the petitioner in the proceeding and how that interest may be affected by the results of the proceeding; a specification of the contentions, or specific issues, that the petitioner

seeks to have litigated in the hearing; and other information as set out in detail in the *Federal Register* notice.

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